

Israeli court legalizes new settlement in occupied West Bank



Tel Aviv, August 29 (RHC)-- A court in Israel has legalized a settlement illegally built on a Palestinian-owned land in the central West Bank city of Ramallah amid international outcry against the Tel Aviv regime's land expropriation and settlement expansion policies in the occupied Palestinian territories. Judge Arnon Darel at the Jerusalem District Court ruled that settlers at the Mitzpe Kramim settlement had acted in "good faith" and had rights to the property.

The ruling will likely face an appeal at Israel's Supreme Court, which has previously ordered such outposts be forcibly evacuated. The Israeli anti-settlement group Peace Now condemned the court's decision, saying: "Granting of property rights to criminals who settled in an illegal outpost ... without permits, on private Palestinian land is outrageous." Far-right Israeli minister of judicial affairs Ayelet Shaked, however, hailed the move as an "important achievement" for the Tel Aviv regime's settlement expansion plans.

Less than a month before US President Donald Trump took office, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2334, calling on Israel to "immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem."

About 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 illegal settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Palestinians want the West Bank as part of a future independent Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The last round of Israeli-

Palestinian talks collapsed in 2014. Among the major sticking points in those negotiations was Israel's continued settlement expansion on Palestinian territories.

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